nuclear power (ii) assistance in setting up of a training centre in Vietnam (iii) exchange of scientists (iv) setting up of a semi-pilot plant for manufacture, controlling and assessing the quality of U02 ceramic (v) co-operation in exploration of uranium ore mines in Vietnam and (vi) Visit of VAEC delegation in early 2000 to India.

Upgrading and Modification of ECCS

2519. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a 1979 or/and 1987 safety assessment report prepared by the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) had called for urgent upgrading and modification of the Emergency Core Cooling System (ECCS) in the Madras Atomic Power Station (MAPS) Units -1&2.

(b) if so, whether this modification has been carried on MAPS-1&2 so far; and

(c) if not, whether MAPS-1&2 are being run at serious risk to public safety without this modification, and what are the plans of Government to immediately rectify this situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir. DAE has carried out safety assessments of its units through specially appointed committees. While noting that the Emergency Core Cooling System (ECCS), found to be adequate during design of the plant, already exists, the assessment has suggested the desirability of upgrading the ECCS at Rajasthan Atomic Power Station (RAPS) and Madras Atomic Power Station (MAPS).

(b) Upgradation of the existing system arising ouf of the evolving safety criteria are generally carried out during periods of long shut down. This is an internationally accepted practice. The required upgradation has since been carried out in RAPS

Unit-2 during the major shutdown that was taken during 1995-98 for en-masse replacement of coolant channels. A similar approach has been proposed with respect to MAPS, i.e. for upgradation of the ECCS to be implemented during a long shut down that would be necessary when MAPS will undergo en-masse coolant channel replacement.

(c) No, Sir. The existing ECCS is designed to provide adequate safety if an unlikely event were to demand its actuation.

Safety of Nuclear Establishments

2520. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed the safety aspect of various nuclear establishments in the country;

(b) if so, the plant-wise steps taken thereon; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir. The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) is an independent regulatory body meant for review and regulation of safety aspects of all the nuclear establishments in the country.

(b) and (c) The review of safety aspects of all nuclear establishments in the country is a continuous process. For this purpose, a three tier safety review process is adopted under the overall control of the AERB. Firstly, each plant has a Unit Safety Committee which looks into every safety related event/aspect by means of carrying out periodic safety review and regulatory inspections at the various nuclear establishments/plants. Secondly, the reports thereof and the issues of higher safety significance are reviewed/examined by the Safety Review Committee for Operating Plants (SARCOP) of AERB. The third tier in this review process is the AERB itself. The recommendations made by the Safety Committee i.e. SARCOP and AERB are binding on all nuclear establishments in the country and are implemented in a time-bound manner.

Setting up of Nuclear Safety Research Institute

2521. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has recently